

REMARKS

Applicant notes that claims 17-20 and 52 are allowed and that claims 16, 27 and 38 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims (subject to the claims further being amended to comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112). It is also noted that claims 3-15, 21-28, 35 and 37-45 depending directly or indirectly upon claim 52 would be considered allowable.

The Examiner's detailed comments and explanation of each and every point of the rejection is appreciated. Applicant, on the other hand, is unable to agree with the Examiner with respect to his interpretation of the teachings of Supersberger (DE '169), Gwyther (US '858) and Pervan (US '579) for the reasons discussed below.

Amendments to Claims 1, 13, 52 and 59

Claim 1 has been amended to change the phrase "without interference with the panels" to "without disengaging the panels... from their respective holders" in view of the fact that, in practice, a panel between adjacent rows of panels might on occasion slightly move an adjacent panel while not causing its disengagement from its respective holder. The prior language was unduly restrictive and Applicant is entitled to the broader language that more precisely reflects the scope of the invention as disclosed.

Claim 59 likewise has been amended in the same fashion.

Claims 13, 52 and 59 have been amended to correct an incorrect prior amendment resulting from a misunderstanding on the part of Applicant's attorney. In the prior claim language, each fixing part was recited as including features which facilitated a smooth, lateral flexible bending. Actually, only a fixing part on one side of each holder needs to include such a feature in accordance with the written description. Claims 13, 52 and 59 have been amended to reflect the correct configuration of the claimed holders.

Claims 13 and 59 also have been amended to recite that the holders include opposed fixing parts arranged to engage and retain opposed edges or portions of single one and the same panel in a manner enabling a panel to be disconnected from the holder. The language is fully supported by the disclosure in the drawings and moreover,

such limitation was previously recited in claims 3 and 4.

Rejection of Claims 1, 59 and 63 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger
Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner contends that, since Supersberger discloses all of the structural features of claims 1 and 59, the device disclosed in the patent will inherently function in the same manner as Applicant's claimed device. It is respectfully submitted that Supersberger does not disclose all the structural features of claims 1, 59 and 63 and does not provide a teaching that the structure described therein will inherently function in the same manner as Applicant's claimed device.

In the first place, the embodiment according to figure 1 in Supersberger fails to provide any teaching at all that a middle panel can be removed from between two adjacent panels without disengaging the panels on either side of the middle panel from their respective holders.

The embodiment according to figure 1 of Supersberger also fails to provide any teaching of fixing parts arranged to engage and retain the panels in a disconnectable manner over a part of the thickness of the panels. In figure 1, the tongue portion of each panel simply rests against the outer ledge of a holder and it is retained at such position by the groove of the next succeeding panel. Thus, figure 1 is incapable of providing a teaching of Applicant's device as claimed in claim 1, 59 and 63.

With regard to figures 2 and 3, the Examiner's attention is invited to Exhibits A, B, and C appended hereto representing figures 2, 3, and the main body of the written description respectively, of Supersberger.

The Examiner contends that a play, or space, located in the grooves of the connected elements enable the fixing parts to retain the panels in a disconnectable manner over a part of the thickness of the panels without interference with the adjacent panels.

It is respectfully submitted that there is no clear disclosure of play in either figure 2 or figure 3 (Exhibits A and B) of Supersberger. With regard to figure 2 as shown on Exhibit A, the coupled panels are not actually illustrated as coupled, but rather are only

depicted in a partially assembled configuration. Thus, there is no teaching at all of any play between coupled panels in the figure 2 embodiment of Supersberger. Also, even assuming that some play might exist in the joined panels, there is no teaching whatsoever in Supersberger that a central panel could be removed from between adjacent rows of panels without disengaging the adjacent panels from their respective holders. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has made an assumption with regard to the existence of sufficient play to enable disengagement of a single panel from between rows of panels but such assumption is not based on the actual teaching of the reference document. The Examiner's attention is invited to the area indicated as P1 in Exhibit A which clearly shows the existence of little or no play whatsoever with respect to the illustrated panel. Contrary to the Examiner's belief, Applicant submits that the next adjacent panel about to be installed likewise would have little or no play once it became fully installed, similar to the area shown at region P1. The Exhibit C translation of the Supersberger written description fails to support the Examiner's contention and appears instead to teach away from same.

With regard to the embodiment of figure 3 of Supersberger, the removal of a panel from in between adjacent panels is furthermore excluded for the following reasons, with reference to Exhibit B appended hereto. When the panel 11A is mounted, the bendable leg L is urged in a substantially flat condition due to the contact with the rear wall R of the panel 11A. As a consequence, the hook H1 comes into a fixed position, resulting in the panel 11B being held in a fixed position between fixed hooks H1 and H2. Because in mounted condition, both hooks H1 and H2 are in a fixed position (neither of the hooks can be displaced any more) it is clear that the respective panel cannot be removed anymore. The small plays indicated as P2 and P3 are purely schematic and the extent of the plays cannot be determined or assessed. Even if small plays existed, there is no teaching in the patent that they would allow the removal of a panel from in between to two adjacent panels for the reasons explained previously.

With regard to claim 59, it is to be noted that this claim, as presently amended, recites that each holder includes opposed fixing parts arranged to engage and retain opposed edges or portions of a single one and the same panel in a disconnectable

manner over a part of the thickness of the respective panel. It is respectfully submitted that this language further distinguishes the subject matter of claim 59 over that of Supersberger, which fails to disclose in any of its embodiments a single holder having opposed fixing parts arranged to engage and retain opposed edges or portions of a single one and the same panel in a disconnectable manner over a part of the thickness of the respective panel.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 59 and 63 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Supersberger is not appropriate and withdrawal of same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 3/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

This rejection is not understood, as Supersberger fails to provide any teaching in any of its embodiments of two fixing parts made in one piece with the holders and arranged so as to cooperate with two edges or portions of one and the same panel respectively. Claim 3 specifically recites that the holders are each provided with at least two fixing parts made in one piece with the holders and which are arranged so as to cooperate with two edges or portions of one and the same panel.

In accordance with the embodiments illustrated in Supersberger, the holder associated with one edge of a panel to be retained by the holder is separate from the holder associated with the opposed edge of the same panel. In none of the embodiments is there a single holder having two fixing parts made in one piece with the holder arranged so as to cooperate with two edges or portions of one and the same panel.

This rejection appears to be inappropriate and withdrawal of same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 4/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

It appears that the Examiner has misunderstood claim 4. In accordance with claim 4, each holder that includes fixing parts arranged to engage and retain panels in a disconnectable manner over a part of a thickness of the panels cooperates with a

respective single panel. Thus, since the holders cooperate with the respective single panel, the fixing parts must inherently cooperate with a respective single panel. As noted previously, in accordance with the embodiments of Supersberger, each holder is a separate element associated with a single side of a respective panel and none of the holders are arranged to cooperate with opposed sides of a respective single panel.

Withdrawal of this rejection appears to be appropriate and the same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 6/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 6 has been amended to indicate that each of the holders includes two fixing parts arranged to cooperate with the edges or with panel portions situated near the panel edges respectively of two adjacent panels. It is respectfully submitted that claim 6 is fully patentable over Supersberger for the reasons indicated previously with regard to claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6 accordingly is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 13/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 13 as presently amended recites that the fixing parts of each holder cooperate with two edges or portions of one and the same panel, a feature not seen or suggested in Supersberger. While Supersberger at least in the figures 2 and 3 embodiments illustrates a holding part that can be bent to facilitate installation of a panel, the reference fails to teach that a panel located between adjacent rows can be removed without disengagement of an adjacent panel from its respective holder after the panels are installed, as previously discussed.

It is respectfully submitted that withdrawal of the rejection of claim 13 is appropriate and the same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of claim 14 and 15 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger
Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

It is submitted that claims 14 and 15 are patentable for the same reasons as

discussed above with regard to claim 13. It is respectfully submitted that withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14 and 15 is appropriate.

Rejection of Claim 24/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

It is respectfully submitted that claim 24 is patentable over Supersberger for the reasons indicated previously with respect to claim 1. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 26 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 26 has been amended to indicate that the beveled edge is provided to facilitate the turning in and out of the panels relative to each other at the tongue and groove joints. The Examiner's interpretation of Supersberger was not previously understood and could not be anticipated before transmittal of the final rejection. The amendment is believed to be appropriate and clearly delineates the subject matter of claim 26 from Supersberger, as there is no beveled edge for facilitating the turning in and out of the panels of Supersberger relative to each other at the tongue and groove joints. Indeed, it is only the figure 1 embodiment of Supersberger that even shows a tongue and groove joint connectable together by rotation of one panel relative to the other. It is respectfully submitted that the figure 1 illustrations of Supersberger fail to clearly teach the claimed beveled edge, which figure is quite schematic and sketchy in the vicinity of the tongue and groove joints.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 26 is requested.

Rejection of Claim 28/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 28/1 has been amended to recite that each holder comprises only one pair of opposed fixing parts engaging opposed edges or portions of each panel to be held. Again, it is pointed out that the Examiner's interpretation of Supersberger could not be anticipated before transmittal of the final rejection and thus the need to more precisely recite the inventive subject matter in claim 28 was not anticipated. The amendment language simply elucidates what was intended in the original language and is not

intended to introduce significant new limitations that were not anticipated by the Examiner while conducting a search against the subject matter of the claim.

It is clear that Supersberger fails to provide any teaching of holders comprising only one pair of opposed fixing parts engaging opposed edges or portions of each panel to be held. As noted previously, each holder of Supersberger is independent of the other holder and functions only at one respective edge of a panel to be supported by the holders.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 28 is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 30 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claim 30 recites that the fixing means as well as the tongue and groove joint enable the panels to be rotated along the side of the tongue during assembly and disassembly of the panels and holders. This arrangement can be seen in figure 11 of the drawings of this application, for example.

Supersberger does not show or teach any such structure in any of the illustrated embodiments. The only tongue and groove configuration is Supersberger that can be equated in any manner with the subject matter of claim 30 is the figure 1 embodiment. However, in figure 1 of Supersberger each panel is rotated about its groove side as opposed to the tongue side for assembly to each holder and each prior installed panel. Clearly, from the structure shown in figure 1 of Supersberger, rotation of each panel along the side of each tongue during assembly and disassembly would not be possible.

While figures 2 and 3 of Supersberger show tongue and groove connections, the tongue in each case constitutes a spline and each panel is assembled to its respective holder and spline in a manner completely different from the structure recited in claim 30.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 30 is appropriate and the same is requested.

Rejection of Claims 31-33 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger
Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 31, 32 and 33 depend directly or indirectly from claim 30 and are believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 30. In

addition, each of claims 31-33 recites additional structural subject matter not shown, described or remotely suggested in Supersberger.

Claim 32, it will be noted, has been amended to recite that the fixing means are arranged to cooperate with two edges or portions of one and the same panel, and the fixing means as well as the tongue and groove joint, enable the panels to be rotated along the side of the groove during the assembly and disassembly of the panels and holders. In Supersberger, each of the holding means is separate and none include a fixing means cooperating with two edges or portions of one and the same panel.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 31-33 is believed to be appropriate and the same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 35/1, 36 and 37/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger
Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 35-37 are believed to be fully patentable over Supersberger in view of the arguments advanced previously in support of the patentability of claim 1 over Supersberger. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 35-37 accordingly is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 39/1, 42/1, 43 and 44/1 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger
Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

It is respectfully submitted that claims 42-44 are patentable for the same reasons as advanced previously in connection with claim 1. Furthermore, claim 44 now specifically recites that each of the holders includes opposed fixing parts arranged to cooperate with one an the same panel, a structure nowhere found, taught or suggested by Supersberger.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 42-44 is appropriate and the same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 59-63 as Unpatentable Over Supersberger Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

As noted previously, claim 59 is fully patentable over Supersberger in view of its

recitation that the holders include opposed fixing parts arranged to engage and retain opposed edges or portions of the single one and the same panel in disconnectable manner over a part of the thickness of the respective panel. Supersberger fails to show, suggest or teach such a structure and accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 59 appears to be appropriate.

Claim 59 also recites that each fixing part includes at least on one side of the holder features which facilitate a smooth, lateral, flexible bending to enable a firm interlocking in a direction perpendicular to the surface of a panel covering. Supersberger fails to provide any showing, suggestion or teaching of the combined structure presently recited in claim 59, as each holder in Supersberger is an independent fixing device separate from the next adjacent fixing device. Supersberger fails to provide a holder in which opposed fixing parts engage and retain opposed edges or portions of a single one and the same panel and wherein each fixing part includes at least on one side of the holder a feature which facilitates a smooth, lateral flexible bending to enable a firm interlocking of the panel covering in a direction perpendicular to the covering.

The arguments previously advanced with regard to the patentability of claim 1 also apply with regard to claim 59 to the extent that Supersberger fails to show, suggest or teach that the panels can be removed from between adjacent rows without disengaging the adjacent panels from their respective holders.

Claims 60-63 are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 59 and are believed to be patentable for the reasons given above with regard to claim 59. Each of these claims also recites subject matter patentably distinct over claim 59 which further renders them distinguishable over Supersberger in their own right.

Claim 60 has been amended to recite what was previously believed to be clearly implied, namely that each holder cooperates with respective single one and the same panel.

Rejection of Claims 59-63 and 65 as Unpatentable Over Gwyther (US '858)

With regard to claim 59, this rejection is respectfully traversed, as Gwyther fails to disclose that the fixing parts of at least one side of the holder includes features which

facilitate a smooth, lateral, flexible bending, so that in a direction perpendicular to the surface of the covering a firm interlocking is obtained.

Gwyther fails to illustrate any firm interlocking in a direction perpendicular to the panel surface. Instead, in accordance with Gwyther, the panels are only clamped between flanges 38 and 40, whereby the panels can be pulled from in between the flanges if a sufficient pulling force is exerted. In accordance with Gwyther, the interlocking (clamping) can only be made more firm by increasing the clamping force between the flanges. However, when this done lateral bending of the flanges is made more difficult and results in more difficult installation of the panels.

In accordance with the rejected claims, "smooth lateral bending" is combined with "firm interlocking in a perpendicular direction". Gwyther fails to disclose this last feature according to which the panels can be readily disconnected at one side by shifting the panel laterally to the other side. In Gwyther, even if a central panel could be urged a little bit to one side, for instance against the force of the flange 38, the flange 40 would simply follow this movement resulting in the panel remaining clamped. Dislodging in accordance with Gwyther is only possible by actuating the lever arms 46.

Claims 60-63 are believed to be patentable for the same reasons as given above with regard to claim 59 and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 60-63 is respectfully requested.

With regard to claim 65, this claim has been amended to more specifically recite that the fixing means comprise multiple pairs of fixing parts protruding from a surface of the strips. This structure was implicit in the previous claim language but has been made explicit in view of the Examiner's interpretation of Gwyther as indicated for the first time in the final rejection.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 65 as-amended appears to be appropriate and the same is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 49-51 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as Unpatentable Over Supersberger

Claims 49-51 have been canceled, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claims 1, 3-15, 21-26, 28, 30-33, 35-37, 39, 42-45, 49-51, and 53-58 as Unpatentable over Gwyther (U.S. '858) In View of Supersberger (DE '169)

The Examiner relies on the teachings of Gwyther as a basic teaching in rejecting the claims listed above, but acknowledges that Gwyther does not specifically disclose that the panels mesh on their edges by means of a tongue and groove joint provided by the panels or by an inserted element. The Examiner relies on the teachings of Supersberger in support of the position that it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Gwyther so that the panels disclosed therein could be joined along their edges by means of a tongue and groove joint as recited in the rejected claims.

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The panels of Gwyther are intended to be individually releasable by manipulation of the lever arms 46. Providing a tongue and groove connection between the panels would utterly defeat the ability of releasing the panels individually without disturbing the next adjacent panels. Accordingly, the suggestion of the Examiner to modify Gwyther by providing a tongue and groove joint essentially would destroy the function of Gwyther and it is inconceivable that a person skilled in the art would consider such modification if the result were to defeat the original inventive concept of Gwyther.

Gwyther is intended to provide commercial panels that can be individually removed without disturbing the entire covering of panels by manipulating a lever arm. Tongue and groove type joints between panels do not enable individual panels to be removed unless the securing device is provided with sufficient flexibility or play to permit removal of a panel between adjacent rows of panels. Gwyther fails to provide any such teaching.

The person of ordinary skill in the art would immediately recognize such difference and it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's position is logically flawed.

Simply put, the concepts underlying Gwyther and Supersberger relate to entirely different panel systems and one system cannot be simply interchanged or combined with the other without substantially modifying either one of the systems.

The rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is not believed to be appropriate and withdrawal of same is respectfully requested. Withdrawal of the rejection of all claims dependent directly or indirectly on claim 1 also should be withdrawn for the reasons already given with regard to the patentability of claim 1 over the cited prior art.

Rejection of Claims 40/1 and 41 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as Unpatentable Over Gwyther, Supersberger and Pervan (U.S. '579)

This rejection is respectfully traversed for the same reasons indicated previously with regard to claim 1 to the extent that the Examiner attempts to combine the teachings of Gwyther and Supersberger by modifying Gwyther to include a tongue and groove connection between the panels. As noted above, this would entirely render ineffective the concept underlying the Gwyther panel system.

Accordingly, irrespective of the teachings of Pervan, the rejection of claims 40 for and 41 is not appropriate because the basic reference Gwyther may not be modified in accordance with the suggestions of the Examiner in any logical form. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 40 and 41 is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 64 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as Unpatentable Over Gwyther

The Examiner contends that Gwyther could be modified so that the holders are made of plastic without involving invention, as such a substitution would be evident to a person of ordinary skill in the art. The Examiner bases this theory on general knowledge that plastic is known to be easily moldable, resilient and inexpensive, while having good elastic properties.

It is respectfully submitted that, while the Examiner's observation may be factually true with regard to the properties of plastic materials, nevertheless, there is no teaching contained in the prior art thus far developed even remotely suggesting that a holder as recited in claim 64 could be made of a plastic material. While Applicant's disclosure indicates that both plastic and metal may be used, nevertheless the application does not admit that they are interchangeable in all respects and in every configuration reasonably contemplated by the disclosure. It is respectfully submitted that if the holder recited in

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claim 64 was obvious to a person skilled in the art, some teaching would be available in the vast body of prior art relating to panel supports that would be indicative of the obviousness of such a structure. No such teaching is available and it is respectfully submitted that this rejection should be withdrawn as unsupported by factual evidence.

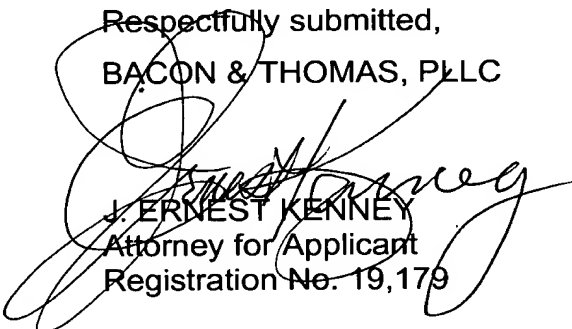
New claim 66 is intended simply to restore the limitation previously recited in claim 1 that the panels can be separated from their respective holders without interference with panels in adjacent rows. The disclosure fully supports this claim and it is not believed to introduce any new subject matter that would require further searching on the part of the Examiner. Indeed, the Examiner considered this limitation when preparing the last office action.

Concluding Remarks

In view of the comments and amendments submitted herewith, it is respectfully submitted that each rejection of the claims has been traversed and that withdrawal of all rejections is appropriate. Passage of the application to issue is solicited.

Applicant requests entry of the amendments at least for purposes of appeal in the event that the Examiner declines to withdraw the rejections.

Respectfully submitted,
BACON & THOMAS, PLLC



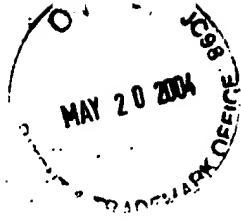
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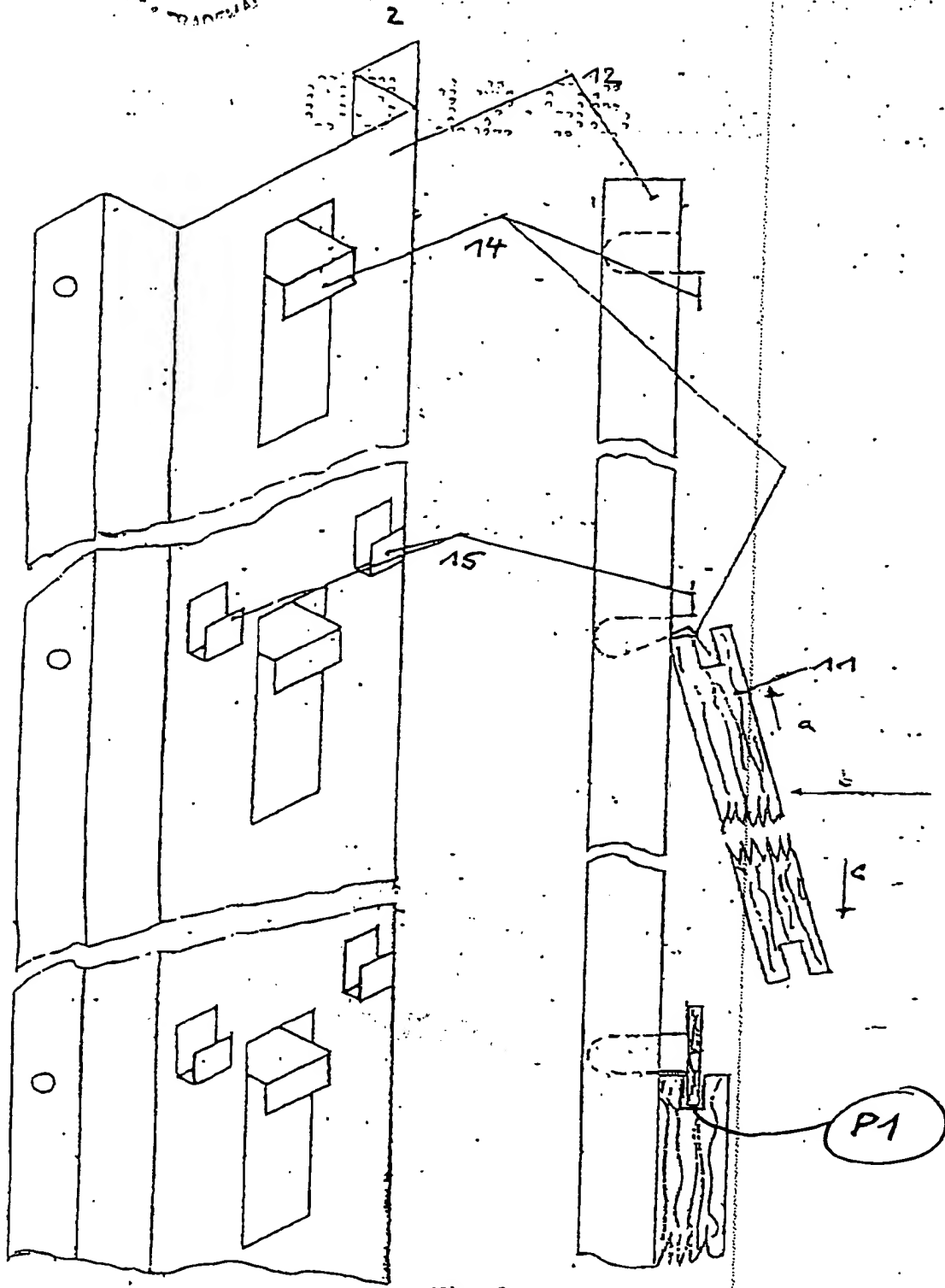


Fig. 2

EXHIBIT A

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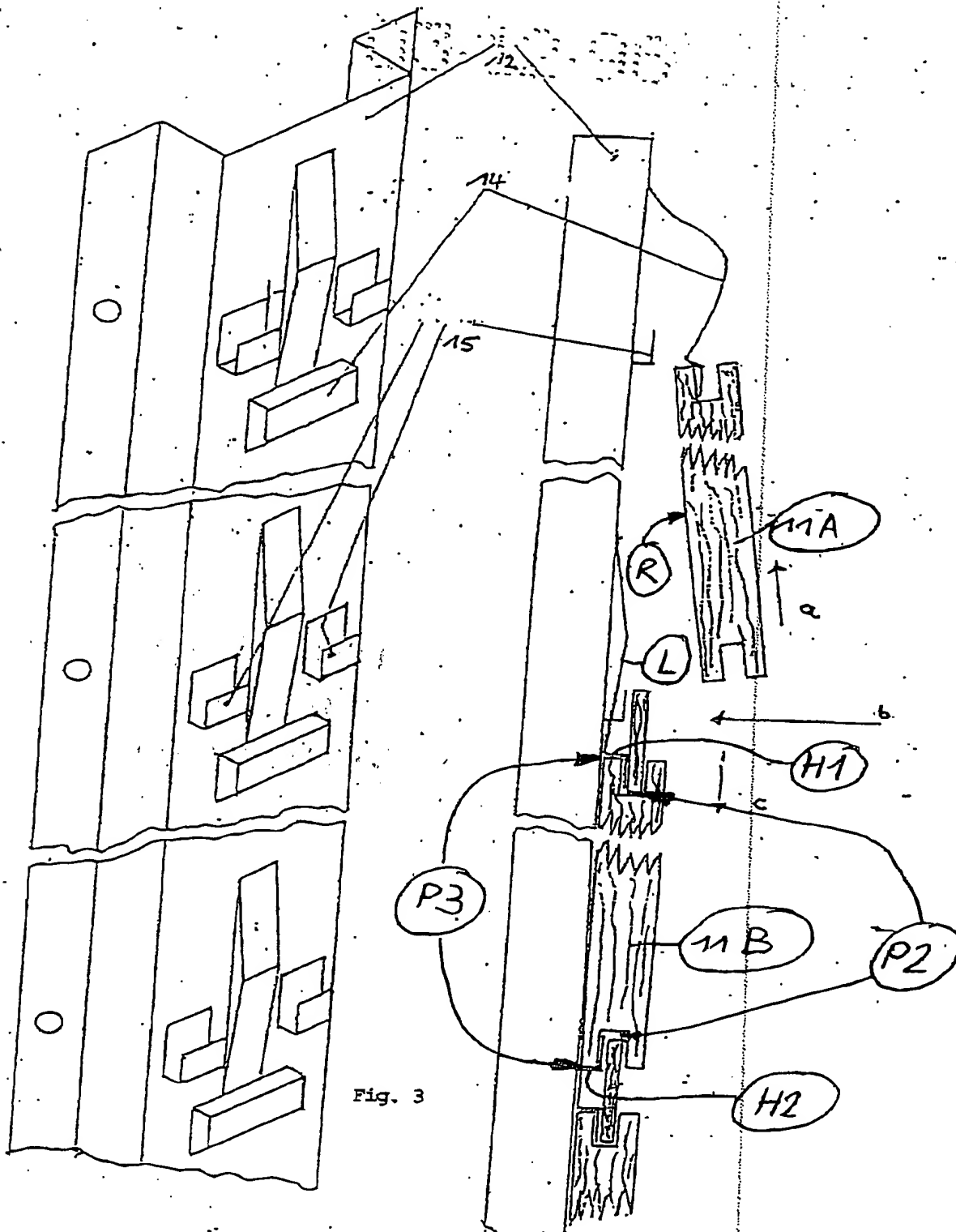


Fig. 3

EXHIBIT B



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[EXCERPTS DE 91 17 169 U1]

AN ASSEMBLY RAIL FOR TONGUE AND/OR GROOVE BOARDS AND PANELING.

It is known to assemble tongue and/or groove boards and paneling as follows.

5 A wood strip is nailed onto a wall or ceiling and the tongue and/or groove boards are affixed to said strip by support claws each of which must be nailed onto said strip in labor intensive manner.

10 In the invention the tongue and/or groove boards are mounted as follows: An assembly rail 12 (Figs. 1 and 2) is affixed to a wall or ceiling. Then the tongue and/or groove boards 11 are inserted in slightly oblique manner by their grooves 25 into the support claws 13 in said rail 12 and next are forced against this rail. Each subsequent tongue and/or groove board firmly affixes the previous one.

15 The last tongue and/or groove board is affixed in place by an edge strip. The mounting strip eliminates affixing the support claws individually. The assembly rail is an appropriately stamped sheetmetal and can be manufactured in arbitrary lengths. The support claws stamped out of the assembly rail may be of arbitrary widths to accommodate various thicknesses of tongue and/or groove boards; moreover the spacing between the individual support claws may be matched to the width of the tongue and/or groove claws.

20 As regards tongue and/or groove boards which exhibit a groove on both sides, the assembly may be carried out in known manner in the same manner as for tongue and/or groove boards [sic].

25 In the invention on the other hand, an assembly rail 12 is used (Fig. 3) which is affixed to a wall or ceiling. A tongue and/or groove board or a panel 11 is inserted slightly obliquely by the groove 25 into a resilient support claw 14 which then is pressed together until the opposite side of the tongue and/or groove board is situated at the height of the rigid support claws 15. Next the tongue and/or groove board is pressed against the assembly rail and thereupon the resilient support claw is released, as a result of which the second groove 25 of the grooved

EXHIBIT C

board moves into place in the rigid support claws (steps a, b, c of Fig. 3) and thereby is firmly affixed in place.

It is not critical regarding the assembly that the resilient support claws be biased forward or backward, only that they be solid and elastic.

5 In order to mount tongue and/or groove boards and paneling at a space from a wall or ceiling, the invention proposes a crimp connection (Figs. 4 through 9) whereby an approximately 100 mm long segment is cut off using metal shears from a C-section crimping strip 17 available in meter lengths, a sheetmetal strip 19 or also a rail for tongue and/or groove board or paneling assembly then being inserted into said 100 mm long segment and thereupon
10 the nesting sheetmetal parts being connected to each other means of a conical crimping tool 26. The tool's cone is pressed first through the front side of the inserted sheetmetal strip 19 and lastly through the back side of the crimping strip. In the process the crimping strip's displaced material and that of the inserted sheetmetal strip are forced through the crimping strip back side and in this manner good connection is attained. The crimping strip 17 may comprise
15 a bending edge 18 so that, by bending the crimping strip, a corresponding cross-sectional contour may be achieved.

This special kind of assembly offers the particular advantages that neither screws, nor rivets nor drilling shall be required, in that the circular design of the tool's cone precludes tearing into or out of or continued tearing (notching) and that accurate adjustment is possible.

20 The conical crimping tool is designed similarly to conventional nippers, however the conventional straight cutting edges are replaced by a circular cone opposite a cylindrical borehole which said cone shall enter when the tool is being closed.

This kind of assembly is especially useful where otherwise exposed lines and conduits, oblique walls and offsets must be masked.

25 [CLAIMS ...]